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EPA Region 7 to Conduct Radiation Screening of Bridgeton Municipal Athletic Complex in Bridgeton, Mo.

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Environmental News

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



(Lenexa, Kan., May 9, 2014) - Bridgeton, Mo., Mayor Conrad W. Bowers and EPA Region 7 Administrator Karl Brooks announced today the details surrounding EPA's planned radiation screening of the Bridgeton Municipal Athletic Complex (BMAC).

The pair detailed the plans for the screening, which is expected to begin the week of May 19, at a news conference at Bridgeton City Hall.

Recent calls for EPA to check the complex for radiation came after individuals reported using donated equipment to find radiation in a drainage ditch at the property.

"Based on all of the scientifically validated information known to EPA and the State of Missouri, the ball fields remain suitable for use," Brooks said. "EPA will screen the complex to help the City of Bridgeton and the State of Missouri carry out their highest responsibility: to protect the health and safety of this community."

According to Brooks, EPA is responding very quickly using sound science. Brooks pointed out that the BMAC has had some screening for radiation exposures as recently as last year by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources. The sampling results did not indicate the presence of radionuclides above background levels.

"EPA certainly understands what residents and athletes are going through," Brooks said. "This is why EPA will be screening the complex. It's unfortunate that questionable information in the place of scientific data has created public worry; and we want to complete this screening so the public can be assured the facility is suitable for use."

Bridgeton Mayor Conrad W. Bowers said, "The City of Bridgeton is very pleased the EPA will be conducting screening at the Bridgeton Municipal Athletic Complex. The administration maintains the position the information being provided by the EPA and the Department of Natural Resources that there is no health risk is based on sound scientific evidence and operations at the complex will continue. It is our hope the screening results will confirm there is no health risk and any fears concerning the use of BMAC can be laid to rest."

Radiation screening experts from EPA Region 7 and Region 5 will conduct the BMAC screening using radiation detecting instruments, global positioning system (GPS) equipment, and laptops with software to create mapping products indicating where radiation may be present above natural background radiation levels. The equipment will be mounted on an ATV or a push buggy to maneuver the detectors across the area in a pattern similar to a meticulous grounds keeping crew mowing a lawn.

The field survey work is expected to require at least a week to complete. Results of the quality-controlled, quality-assured data analysis should be available about 30 to 60 days after that.

EPA Region 7 will make final results of the screening activity available to the public, both online at its website, www.epa.gov/region7/cleanup/west_lake_landfill, and through social and news media.

"If any further response is necessary, based on what the scientifically validated data tells us, we will be prepared to take appropriate action," Brooks said.

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